

COMMENDATION OF MR. DONALD  
PATA

**HON. HANSEN CLARKE**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 26, 2012*

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Donald Pata, a physics teacher at Grosse Pointe North High School (Grosse Pointe North), for receiving the 2011 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST).

The PAEMST is awarded annually to outstanding K–12 science and mathematics teachers across America. After an initial state-level selection process, the PAEMST winners are chosen by a panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians, and educators. Mr. Pata, the only teacher to receive the PAEMST from Michigan this year, is a Grosse Pointe native. He graduated from Wayne State University with a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry and later returned to get a teaching certificate and Masters Degree in Physics Education.

Shortly after earning his undergraduate degree, Mr. Pata joined the Peace Corps and taught biology, chemistry, physics, and mathematics in Ghana. Mr. Pata later returned to Grosse Pointe and began teaching a wide range of physics classes at Grosse Pointe North, including conceptual physics and AP Physics. He also serves as the Science Department Chairperson and is the faculty advisor for the school district's FIRST Robotics Team.

Mr. Pata appreciates the value of effective teaching. Mr. Pata creates a positive "hands-on" classroom atmosphere where students feel free to contribute to discussion and construct their own knowledge. He leads by example and empowers his students to achieve their highest potential. Mr. Pata seeks out opportunities to develop his knowledge of teaching methodology and physics, and travels across the United States attending advanced physics teaching workshops and classes.

As a member of the House of Representatives Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, I know how important it is to have dedicated, innovative, and engaged science teachers working in our schools. Mr. Pata is teaching our children to think creatively, be open to new ideas, and embrace scientific and technological change.

I recognize Mr. Pata as a leader in science education in Metro Detroit and thank him for his commitment to his students and community.

CONSERVATION AND ECONOMIC  
GROWTH ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. RON BARBER**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 19, 2012*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2578) to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act related to a segment of the Lower Merced River in California, and for other purposes:

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Chair, I rise today to raise concerns about H.R. 2578. I support the goal of the provision (H.R. 1505) which will strengthen our efforts to secure the border, but I believe it was overreaching.

I have long believed that securing our border is of paramount importance to the safety of the people who live and work along the border, but I do not believe that this end needs to be achieved at the expense of maintaining a strong commitment to our environment and the regulations that ensure its protection. I would have preferred that we consider a standalone bill which specifically responded to the expressed needs of the Department of Homeland Security regarding access to public lands.

I do not support those provisions of H.R. 2578 which seek to privatize public land and significantly reduce the scope of existing laws which protect those lands.

I am against the rule specifically because I believe that amendments should have been heard to improve this bill.

THE TEXAS AGGIES—NO ONE  
QUITE LIKE 'EM

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 26, 2012*

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the sun was lazily rising on the horizon. It was around breakfast time on a stunning Sunday morning. It was quiet, peaceful, calm. People felt secure. There was a small tropical breeze as the American flag was being raised on a nearby flagpole.

Suddenly over the horizon, a large formation of aircraft darkened the glistening sky. They broke formation and dove down from the sky, unleashing a fury of deadly, devastating bombs and torpedoes on a quiet place called Pearl Harbor in the Pacific Ocean. It was on that day, 70 years ago, when sailors, soldiers, airmen, and marines saw war declared on America. It was December 7, 1941.

Over 5,000 miles away from terror stood a small, quiet town covered in maroon décor known as College Station, Texas. College Station is not only home to Texas A&M University's Fightin' Texas Aggies, but also to the patriotic Corps of Cadets. Around campus you can spot the Corps of Cadets marching in sync wearing the uniform that matches their rank whether it is brown leather boots or trousers made of serge material.

December usually holds a brisk chill in the air in College Station, but the Texas sun kept the weather from being unbearable. Word traveled fast of chaos on the Pacific as America became engaged in another world war. Aggie tradition tells us that on that day teenagers turned soldiers when the entire 1942 junior class enlisted into the war along with half of their senior level comrades. They were all volunteers. They stood together as Aggies, brothers, Texans and Americans. They stood shoulder to shoulder and raised their right hands in unison and swore to defend their homeland. College Station became an image in a rear view mirror as pens and pencils were traded for guns and ammo. They left Texas to go fight on small islands in the Pacific, brutal deserts in North Africa and bloody beaches in Italy and France.

The year 1942 was also the time of the most well-known Aggie Muster under the command of General George Moore during World War II. Aggie Muster is on April 21st which also happens to be San Jacinto Day, the day Texas won independence at the battle of San Jacinto in 1836. Amid fierce enemy fire, General Moore and 25 fellow Aggies mustered in the trenches and caves on Corregidor in the Philippines. A war correspondent observed the make-shift ceremony and the world was introduced to the Aggie spirit. Every one of those Aggies were either killed or captured by the Japanese. Four years later when the Americans returned with Gen. McArthur and retook the island the Aggies mustered again. When I went to the Philippines recently, I saw a photo of those returning Aggies on the fortress wall of the Malinta Tunnel on Corregidor.

According to Aggie Muster tradition, "if there is an A&M man in one hundred miles of you, you are expected to get together, eat a little, and live over the days you spent at the A&M College of Texas." During times of war, Muster is especially poignant. Texas A&M has produced more officers in the United States military than even West Point. It has the distinction, other than West Point, of having more Medal of Honor recipients than any other university in the United States. When General George Patton was in Europe going into combat in the Third Army, he made a comment about the Texas Aggies and the soldiers that he had under his command. He said, "Give me an army of West Point graduates and I will win a battle. You give me a handful of Texas Aggies, and I will win the war."

The Aggies' long tradition of duty and service to our great nation dates back to their beginning, to the days when A&M was an all-male military academy. Texas A&M trained nearly 4,000 troops during World War I and over 20,000 Aggies served in World War II, 14,000 as officers. World War II was hard. Millions served in uniform overseas; millions served on the home front; all sacrificed for the cause of America. Many of them gave their lives all over the globe in places known only to God.

The Aggie band doesn't play an Aggie "Fight Song". There is no such thing. The band plays the "Aggie War Hymn", quite a different concept. The "Aggie War Hymn" was written by Aggie Marine J.V. "Pinky" Wilson while standing guard on the Rhine River during World War I. It remains the most recognizable school war hymn across the country—probably the world.

Today, Muster is observed in more than 400 places worldwide and this year's "Roll Call of the absent" honored 970 people around the world, including those remarkable young men and women who gave their lives for our country in lands far far away. While Muster is a time to honor those that have died, it also is a time when Aggies, young and old, come together to reconnect and celebrate a way of life known only to those that proudly hail from Aggieland.

Muster means different things to different people. Every Aggie will tell you something different, something personal about what it means to them as an Aggie. One thing that is consistent in every answer is their dedication to tradition. It is the rich heritage of tradition that sets Texas A&M apart from all the rest. It is the Corps, the Aggie War Hymn, the 12th Man, Midnight Yell, Bonfire, Texas State pride